1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda



called *martir*; to Nòdrs were given *nashperthir*; to Pan, *pineipir*; to Melgars, *persasir*; these buffaloes originally given being called in general *nòdrodvaiir*; lit. "buffaloes who rule."

In various ways the buffaloes originally given to one clan have passed into the possession of other clans. This has happened when buffaloes have been purchased, but is chiefly due to the existence of several customs which involve gifts of buffaloes. The tradition also runs that soon after the buffaloes were originally given, the Nòdrs people built the *kudrpali* with seven rooms to which I have already referred and begged the Kars people for *martir* to milk at this dairy. Similarly the people of Kanòdrs borrowed *martir* from Kars to milk at their conical dairy, and similar transferences of buffaloes may have occurred between other clans. In these and possibly in other ways buffaloes have passed from one clan to another, and as the buffaloes have in many cases kept their original names, most clans now possess buffaloes of several kinds.

I was for a long time very doubtful about the relation of the *kudrpali* and *tarvali* to one another, and had very great difficulty in finding out which buffaloes belonged to each kind of dairy. Finally, it became quite clear that the same buffaloes might be milked either at a *kudrpali* or a *tarvali*, and that the possession of a *mani* was the chief point which determined whether a given dairy was a *kudrpali* or a *tarvali*.

The same kind of buffalo may be milked at one kind of dairy in one clan and at the other kind in another clan. The *nashperthir* of Nòdrs are milked at the *tarvali* of that place, but those of Kars are milked at the *kudrpali* together with the *martir*. Further, in at least one case, the same buffaloes might be milked in one village of a clan at a *kudrpali* and in another village at a *tarvali*. The Pan people now live chiefly at Naters and the chief villages of the clan in the Kundahs, Pan and Kuirsi, are deserted during the greater part of the year. When these villages are occupied the *pineipir* are milked at their *kudrpali* dairies, but when the people are at Naters the same buffaloes are milked at the *tarvali*. The *mani* is left at Pan, and I was told that if the bell were to be

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one wife, and each house belongs to a family of this kind, and is handed on to the children of the brothers. 423 595

If the brothers quarrel, the affair is settled by the *naim*, and it is usually decided that one brother or more than one of the brothers shall occupy the house for a certain period, usually a year, and that at the end of this period he (or they) shall move to another village, when another brother or brothers will occupy the house. 598 627

Such disputes do not seem to be frequent, but one was in existence during my visit. The two younger of three brothers had taken a wife without the knowledge of the eldest. The latter did not approve of the choice, and wished his brothers to send the wife away, which they refused to do. As the dispute had not yet been settled, the eldest brother at the time of my visit was living in the house, while the other brothers were living at the village of their newly chosen wife.

If a family dies out, it seems that the house is not, as a rule, taken on by another family. It falls into disuse, and in time disappears. As a village may sometimes consist of one house only, villages may disappear in this way, and the ruins of some villages were pointed out to me which had fallen into disuse owing to the dying out of the families which formerly occupied them. A really important village, *i.e.*, one with an important dairy, would of course never disappear in this way, but it is possible that the reason why some villages, such as Nasmiòdr and Kanòdrs, now consist of a dairy only, is that the families which possessed the houses at these villages became extinct. I do not, however, know positively that a house at such an important village may not, in some cases, be taken over by another family. 425 361 621

Breeks has stated that the Toda custom is that the house shall pass to the youngest son. It seems quite clear that this is wrong, and that this custom is absolutely unknown among the Todas. It is, however, a Badaga custom, and among them I was told that it is due to the fact that as the sons of a family grow up and marry, they leave the house of the parents and build houses elsewhere. It is the duty of the youngest son to dwell with his parents and support them as long as they [114 428] 171

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existed among the Todas as among so many other races, till it was pointed out that this was like a buffalo with one horn, and the youngest son was therefore similarly endowed to restore the symmetry of the family. The buffalo influences the Toda mind so much that I do not think this is a far-fetched explanation of a custom which appears to be the unique possession of this people.

The word *kudr* is also the name of one of the divisions of the clan, and it seemed clear in this case that the proper number of *kudr* in each clan is two.

There is much transference of buffaloes from one man to another, or from one family to another. Many ceremonies involve gifts of buffaloes, and these are usually presented by a member of one clan to a member of another. Marriage is one of the chief occasions of such gifts. Refusal to fulfil the marriage contract and divorce involve the payment of buffaloes, and the *tererstthi* custom is a great source of the passing of buffaloes from one clan to another. Similarly, buffaloes are given at the ceremonies of naming, ear-piercing, &c., and as I have already pointed out, these transferences have led to great confusion in the classification of the different kinds of sacred buffaloes, as a man may have in his possession animals belonging to several named groups.

In the case of ordinary buffaloes, or *putiir*, it seemed that a distinction is made between buffaloes which have been acquired by a man and those descended from animals which had been in the possession of his father and grandfather. My attention was drawn to this point by the occurrence at the funeral of Sinerani. The recalcitrant buffalo on this occasion was one of the latter kind, and I was told that it should not have been killed at the funeral of a girl because, being descended from a buffalo which belonged to Kuriolv's grandfather, Kuriolv's heirs had a right to it of which they were deprived by its slaughter for a girl. If the dead child had been a boy the slaughter of this buffalo would have been proper, for the dead child in this case would have been one of the heirs.

Transferences of buffaloes also take place between Todas and Badagas, as we have seen in connexion with the ear-

10: Emeneau L-5 (1935-1937) 1938
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grants, both Indian and European, in the last century, and by the expansion of Badaga agricultural activity. Curtailment of the pasturage areas must have been appreciable even in the days when only the Badagas were agriculturalists in the hills. It is difficult to make out how serious a matter this had become by the beginning of the 19th century. Since then the matter has become serious indeed. First settlement by the English at Ootacamund, Coonoor, and Wellington necessitated purchase of land from the Todas. The sib of the mɨkɨtjo:ʃ (Rivers' Pam; for details see p. 658) thus lost its chief village and of course the pasture-lands there. So also the two sibs of the ka:ɣo:ʃ and melgɨ-ɣo:ʃ lost a number of villages and the surrounding pastures where Ootacamund now stands, and the two villages from which these sibs take their names are now actually within the area of the municipality with restricted pastures. In other directions pasturages have been alienated, either to the Badagas when they were vigorously extending their fields for the production of vegetables for the markets or to Europeans who bought land for tea-plantations or for other purposes, the most recent of which has been the construction of a dam on the Pykara river and an electric power line over the hills. Most frequently these sales involved land in the lower margins of the plateau, and the high downs to the west of Ootacamund where villages cluster most thickly have not been seriously affected. Alienation can take place only with the consent of Government and this is charily given if it vitally affects the Todas' best interests. It is of some importance also that the hunting of jackals with horses and hounds has been a favorite sport of the English in the Nilgiris and has influenced them in preserving the downs as open country. Two separate major alienations have taken place within the last fifty years. In one case the lands belonging to two associated dairies of the highest grade (the ti:-dairies), one of the ka:ɣo:ʃ sib, the other of the mɵ̈ɣo:ʃ sib, which had not been used for a number of years, were disposed of to the Church of England Zenana Mission for cultivation by the Toda Christian Colony. In the other case two pasturages of the ti: of the ka:ɣo:ʃ sib were sold to Government and are now incorporated in a forest reserve; these were sold when the sib of the ka:ɣo:ʃ were in need of a large sum of money to settle parkumɣ's liability in the suicide of nɵ̈rumɣ. In general,

10: Emeneau L-5 (1935-1937) 1938
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the impression is gained that if Government did not keep a close watch on Toda land, either from a concern for Toda welfare or from a desire to preserve the amenities of the Nilgiris, and prevent the free play of economic pressure, the pastures would soon all be alienated, or at any rate to such an extent that the economic life of the Todas would be severely prejudiced. Toda economic life is to this important extent artificially hedged off from the interference of outside influences and preserved from total disruption. Sir Athelstane Baines' remark that the Todas are "stall-fed aborigines" is in this respect entirely justified.[1]

The Toda Amelioration Scheme was mentioned above in connexion with the payment of Toda debts. The other chief feature of the plan was to induce the Todas to grow potatoes and to work this agricultural enterprise and the sale of their ghee through two cooperative societies. The advantages of the Scheme appealed to a number of the chief men, and some of the superficial benefits made a remarkable appeal to less responsible Todas as a method of getting something for nothing. The scheme broke down on its really vulnerable point. The Todas are pastoralists with no tradition of agriculture and the continuous back-breaking labor it demands, and the attempt to make agriculturalists of them while their own pastoral occupation was still in full working order could not with any confidence have been expected to succeed.[2] Those few who personally engaged themselves in the work found that it went so against their habits that two years of it were more than enough. The majority merely hired outsiders to do the manual labor for them, or sold the seed-potatoes and tools that were advanced to them by the societies. No trace of the Scheme now remains.

Casual employment as beaters for English sportsmen brings in a small, irregular income to a few Todas. The Maharaja of Mysore each year engages fifteen men of the tribe to act as an ornamental bodyguard at his palace in Ootacamund. Some few

[1] Sir Athelstane Baines *Ethnography (Castes and Tribes.)* (Grundriss der Indo-arischen Philologie und Altertumskunde II. 3 b), 123. [113]

[2] See also the Census officer in 1911 (reference in note 1) for the same judgment on the scheme.

10:Emeneau L-5 (1935-1937) 1938
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the chief change, payment of vows to Hindu temples and a belief in a supreme god, were already firmly established thirty-five years ago, and even these have had little effect on the firm core of Toda religious life, important as the payment of vows is in Toda eyes, since they have been merely additions and have set up no conflicts within the old pattern. In social matters such changes as can be seen are mere surface additions, again causing no conflict within the pattern. The innovation in marriage customs attempted by kumaṇjil and recorded by Rivers, which would have produced stress, has been eliminated by the conservatism of the tribe. Most change is seen in economic life, and that in the way of gradual impoverishment through alienation of land and contracting debts in the bazaars, which had set in long before Rivers made his description. Change in the pattern has not yet resulted, in spite of the abortive attempt that was made by the Toda Amelioration Scheme to add agriculture to the life of pastoralists. If a prediction is worth anything, it may be guessed that so long as the economic system is guarded against breakup, as it is now, the tribe will remain as it is now and as it was thirty-five years ago.

There remains the important question of the effect of outside influences on the population figures of the Todas. Rivers in 1906 recorded his conclusion (p. 473): "The Census Reports and the genealogical record agree in pointing to a diminution of the Toda population about the middle of the last century which has now ceased, the probability being that the Todas are increasing slightly in number.....Any decrease...was the direct result of the changes brought about by the advent of Europeans to the Nilgiri Hills." He goes on to refer especially to the influences, injurious to fertility, of syphilis and sexual immorality, and we should surely add gonorrhea. By sexual immorality he seems to mean especially intercourse between women of the tribe and men of other communities. This, though it undoubtedly occurs, is probably of minor importance as compared with the normal system within the tribe. It is probable that the great freedom of sexual intercourse permitted to women by the polyandrous system combined with the monogamous institution by which a woman has at least one "lover" belonging to the other moiety and the freedom to enjoy

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

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511 621 With this money, each individual recipient kept the following members of the family:

Pads: Silidz, Kupidz, Narjilkh and Kuddhue, when the latter is not working elsewhere as a priest (in which case the *mad* where he is employed feeds and clothes him).

Mutnarsh: Erzigwuf, Pershrörsh, Pengelam, Sodup, Sodam, Peterozn, Karnoz and Nalsirwuf.

Munbokwutn: gives the money he earns to his father Pads.

Singud: Odzel, Singarsh and Amoniwuf.

Pilkhlivowutn: Motsod, Izam, Kirsharshwutn and Närshmali.

Pufvkiaroz: Mutmali only.

422 [23] The Melgarsh *mad* owned twenty-seven buffaloes and three baby calves when I was with them in 1949. These were distributed as follows:

17 ordinary (*putir*) buffaloes and one baby calf.

10 sacred (*postir* or *parshashir*) buffaloes and three baby calves.

These belonged to the following as set out below:

1. Singarsh and Singud (in common; this was also the case when they each had a wife and it is, therefore, not linked to their present polyandrous marriage): 6 buffaloes and 1 calf (2 *postir*, 2 *putir*, 2 grown *putir* calves and 1 small *putir* male (*er*) calf).

2. Purshwuö (absentee from Melgarsh, living at Karsh with his wife; his buffaloes are, however, at Melgarsh): 4 buffaloes (1 *postir*, 1 large *postir er* calf and 2 *putir*).

3. Pads: 14 buffaloes and 2 small calves (7 *putir*, 4 *putir* female (*ir*) calves, 1 *postir ir* calf, 2 *postir er* calves, 1 baby *postir er* calf).

4. Mutnarsh, Kuddhue and Munbokwutn (held in common): 3 buffaloes and one calf (3 *postir*, 1 baby *postir ir* calf).

425 Karnoz used to own eight buffaloes, but after two years of married life with Nalsirwuf, he decided to get rid of most of them in favour of the younger men. He thus kept only two (which are now at Kakhwurkh in the care of relative there) and gave the others as follows: three to his sons (the ones shown above, and held jointly by them), two to Singarsh and Singud, and the remaining one to his father-in-law, the father of Nalsirwuf.

425 428 In acting thus, Karnoz was actually forestalling the disposal of his property before his death, as is the practice with most Todas. Should a man die without doing this, his wealth goes jointly to his sons. Should he have no issue, it will be handed to his brothers or to the sons of the latter. Girls can never inherit; all they can hope to get is a dowry from their deceased parents' property, which the heirs should pay to them at [562] [583] the time of their wedding.

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the time of their wedding. In the unusual case of a man having no brothers and no nephews to whom the buffaloes devolve after his death, the herd will go to the *palm*.

I had put up a tent in this immediate vicinity of the Melgarsh *mand*, and was thus able, by staying in it up the twenty-four hours on certain occasions, to follow the everyday life of the family.

The habitual routine was really quite simple. The various members of Melgarsh would sleep in their respective houses as described above, and rise very early with the sun, which in southern India is already up at 4.30 a.m. Pads and Silidz would say their morning prayers (as all Todas do, see Rivers, *The Todas*, p. 31), attend to the calls of nature in the bushes close by, and then prepare the morning food. There was very little washing, the clothes which were taken off at night (underclothes are worn then) being put on again. While Silidz was doing the cooking, Pads would go out and lend a hand with the buffaloes, which were taken out of the pen at this early hour and allowed to graze on the ground in front of the house. He was assisted in this by Munbokwutn, Pershutersh, Narjilkh, Singarsh and sometimes Singud and Kuddihue. The latter, usually *tarvalikartmokh*, would then milk the buffaloes at 8 a.m. before they left with the boys, Munbokwutn and Singarsh, for higher grazing grounds, after the morning meal. Narjilkh would have let the calves out earlier and would have helped to retain them at Melgarsh away from their mothers. The gardeners (Pads, Mutnarsh, Pilkhlivowutn and Pufvkiaroz) once the meal was over would put on some dreadful rags, which were considered by them to be European clothes, and go off to their work in the Botanical Gardens. The women would stay at home and tidy up the houses, sweep them out, wash themselves (especially the younger ones), pound rice in the *kudi*, and cook the evening meal.

The meals are selected from the following foods: milk, buttermilk, butter, *ghee* (clarified *butter*), millet (an Indian cereal), rice, wheat flour in the form of unleavened bread or *gur*, (unrefined cane sugar), coffee, tea, chillis, bamboo shoots, fruits from the woods and honey. No meat is eaten, as Todas, like other Indians, are vegetarians. I obtained this list from Mutnarsh, and as he was very keen to give me all the information that he could, he even asked me, through the interpreter, if I wanted to see how he ate. He was willing, he said, to eat in front of me, then and there. I had some difficulty in dissuading him, and only succeeded by accepting to have rice with him another day, which I did. In caste-ridden India, this was rather exceptional, and I was glad to join